

services that he rose in 1381. In the Isle of Thanet \* they raised a cry that no one should do service or custom to the lordships ' on pain of death.<sup>1</sup> The abolition of this praedial service was one object of the rebels in Kent. But it appears that they were specially interested in political questions and the reform of government, more so than the men of other shires. In Scarborough there were riots against the King's officers, and against unpopular persons in the town. The rioters there, like the mobs of Ghent and Paris at the same period, had for their uniform a hood, presumably of some special colour. In Beverley and York there were also disturbances ; the Duchess of Lancaster was refused admittance into her lord's castle of Pomfret, so greatly did those in authority fear the vengeance of the rebels. But, though breaches of the peace were very general in the south of Yorkshire, it cannot be said with certainty that there was a rebellion in each of the Ridings. The Midland counties appear to have been practically undisturbed. But this was not the case with the South-west. Besides the acts of rebellion in Somerset, there was an unusual number of murders, robberies and unlawful assemblies in Cornwall, Dorset and Devon, though the upheaval was not so complete as in the East and South.<sup>2</sup> (*See map at end of Chapter.*)

The story of the local risings is interesting, but the fate of the rebellion was decided at London between June 12 and 15. It was there that the representatives of the rebels met their rulers and stated their demands ; it was there that for four days a drama was played out, second to none in the history of England for appalling situations, horrible possibilities, and memorable actions.

On Wednesday, June 12, Blackheath was crowded with the most remarkable gathering that ever met on that Champ de Mars of old London. The rebel leaders had planted on the moor two great banners of St. George, around which they assembled their forces. The men of the Surrey shore came up in fresh troops all day long. The towns on the lower Thames had put themselves in the forefront of the rebellion ;

<sup>1</sup> *Kent Arch.*, iii. 71-2 ; B6v. 222, doc. 76.      <sup>2</sup> See Ap.